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FORTHCOMING IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONTENT OF THE LABOUR FORCE AND LABOUR SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEYS

INTRODUCTION

The ABS is planning a number of improvements to the content of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and labour supplementary surveys. These were previously outlined in July 2012 in the **Information Paper: Outcomes of the Labour Household Surveys Content Review** (cat. no. 6107.0).

This article provides an update on these forthcoming improvements and outlines an updated timetable for their implementation.

SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENTS

The improvements to the content of the LFS will result in more information being available from the survey with key measures released more frequently. They will also improve the conceptual robustness and relevance of the survey and enable critical labour market linkages that are not currently possible.

The main improvements that are planned for the LFS are summarised below:

- Underemployment and labour underutilisation available monthly, with the scope of underemployment broadened to include full-time workers
- Educational attainment collected monthly
- Volume measures of labour underutilisation available quarterly
- Leave entitlements and casual work available quarterly
- Public and private sector employment available quarterly
- Retrenchments available quarterly
- Additional detail on the monthly collection of duration of employment with current employer/business
- Refinements to monthly collection of looking for full-time and part-time work
- Introduction of regular estimates of multiple job holding and number of jobs in the economy
- Improvements to monthly gross flows data to capture the full sample
- Aggregate monthly hours worked available for more disaggregations
- Employment classification improvements (covering Status in Employment and Employment Type).

In addition, the ABS will investigate alternative approaches to providing more frequent information about industry of employment.

The ABS will also be consolidating the current labour supplementary surveys into two surveys

per year - run in February and August. This consolidation will provide richer datasets with interrelated topics combined to better enable analysis of key labour market linkages between groups and topics, and will result in a more streamlined, less fragmented survey program.

More detail on the improvements are available in the **Information Paper** released in July 2012. The exact details may change subject to testing and an assessment of statistical impact, to ensure that the changes will not have an adverse impact on respondent burden or on estimates from the LFS.

The review also announced the creation of a Longitudinal Labour Force Confidentialised Unit Record File (LLFS CURF) which was released on 10 December under **Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia, 2008-10** (cat. no. 6602.0). This will allow users to analyse a wide range of labour market topics, including transitions of people into and out of employment and unemployment.

NEW TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE IMPROVEMENTS

The **Information Paper** released in July 2012 indicated that changes would be introduced to the LFS and supplementary surveys from July 2013. With a number of other key developments and enhancements in the LFS taking priority over the next 12 months, in particular regular rebenchmarking of labour force estimates, the ABS will implement the above improvements from July 2014. For more details on these developments see the July 2012 issue of **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0).

In the interim, the current labour supplementary survey program will continue for another year. The revised schedule for the labour supplementary surveys and improvements to the monthly and quarterly LFS is detailed below.

2013	
February	Labour Mobility
May	Education and Work
July	Job Search Experience
August	Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership
September	Persons Not In The Labour Force
	Underemployed Workers
November	Forms of Employment
2014	
February	Persons not in the Labour Force
	Underemployed Workers
	Job Search Experience
May	Education and Work
July	New enhancements to Monthly LFS
August	New enhancements to Quarterly LFS
	Characteristics of Employment
2015 and onwards	
February	Participation, Job Search and Mobility
May	

FURTHER INFORMATION

For any queries regarding the implementation of any of these changes to the LFS, contact Labour Force Estimates on Canberra 02 6252 6525, or via email at labourforce@abs.gov.au.

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